

# Historic Heritage Evaluation

House  
20 Austin Street,  
Mount Victoria



November 2021

## Historic Heritage Evaluation

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Author(s)	This report is based on the 2016-2017 Mount Victoria Heritage Study by Michael Kelly, Heritage Consultant, 2017. Updated by Reuben Daubé, Heritage Advisor RMA, Wellington City Council, 2021.
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Revisions	
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### Acknowledgements

This report is based on the 2016-2017 Mount Victoria Heritage Study by Michael Kelly.



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## Executive Summary

20 Austin Street was identified in the Mount Victoria Heritage Study in 2016-2017 as having significant heritage values. The study was reviewed in the Planning For Growth work programme in 2021 in preparation for the new Wellington District Plan. 20 Austin Street has been identified as meeting the requirements of the Wellington City Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council and has significant historic heritage values under one or more of the assessment criteria included in the Regional Policy Statement.

### Overview

20 Austin Street is a substantial two-storey house that was built to take advantage of the views from Matāirangi Mount Victoria, at a time when Austin Street was barely formed and there were few houses on the hillside. Built in the 1870s, the house is an excellent example of an early Italianate villa and is one of the best-preserved properties from this period in Matāirangi Mount Victoria.

The house has a fine rear-street-facing façade with an unusual tri-partite hipped roof and elegant sash windows. The front west-facing façade has a two-storey verandah, and a projecting bay with notable detailing on the gable end. It was built for its first owner, Robert Hamerton, a successful civil servant and lawyer, and Public Trustee for 11 years.

### Recommendations

It is recommended that 20 Austin Street is added to the Wellington District Plan Schedule of Heritage Items. The extent should encompass the existing external form, scale, and materials of the building, including the roofs.

## Summary Statement of Significance

20 Austin Street is one of Matāirangi Mount Victoria's **best preserved** 1870s residences. It is oriented west for the views yet offers a stimulating view from the street. The house has **townscape value** for its interesting and elegant design, and for its setting within its site, which clearly indicates that it is older and grander than its near neighbours. The house's return to a family residence in 1982 after a long period of use as flats led to internal and external changes to the house, however it remains recognisable as the house built in 1875. Thus, the house is significant for its **age and integrity** and as an **excellent architectural example** of an early Italianate Villa.

The house has **significant historic value** for its association with the key themes of development in Matāirangi Mount Victoria including migration and settlement, suburban expansion, and a 'flight' from the inner-city suburbs after WWII. This was



followed by a return to city living and the gentrification of inner-city suburbs in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Successful civil servant, lawyer and Public Trustee Robert Hamerton built the house and was its first owner.

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to consider the house located at 20 Austin Street against Wellington City Council's criteria for evaluation of historic heritage.

The initial report was prepared by Michael Kelly on the specific instructions of the Wellington City Council. The revised report is intended solely for the use by Wellington City Council in accordance with the agreed scope of work.

## Scope

This report is a desktop study based on the Mount Victoria Heritage Study that Council undertook in 2016 and 2017 to examine the historic heritage values of Matāirangi Mount Victoria. It has been updated, revised, and assessed against the current GWRC and WCC heritage criteria and thresholds.

The house has been inspected from the street only and no interiors have been accessed.



# Heritage Inventory Report

Site Detail	
Site address or address(es) and/or location	20 Austin Street, Matāirangi Mount Victoria, Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington
Property Name	House
Other names	
Legal Description(s) and Record of Title identifier(s), Deeds register and/or Gate notice information	Lot 2 DP 1464 WN138/58
NZTM grid reference	E 1749706.19 N 5426800.39
District Plan Reference Number	Proposed 471
Sites of significance to Māori	None
WCC Heritage Area	None
HNZPT listed	Not listed
HNZPT category	NA
Archaeological site (Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014, Section 6)	
New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA) site record number(s)	Central City R27/270 Thomas Ward Survey Map
Constructed	1875
Significant alterations or additions	1945 House converted into two flats 1982 House reinstated as single dwelling
Architect	Unknown
Builder	Unknown
Former uses	Dwelling
Current uses	Dwelling
Earthquake-prone Building Status at the date of assessment.	NA



Extent: WCC Onemap 3/11/2021



## Historical Summary

### Land and Māori history

The Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington area of Aotearoa New Zealand was said to have been first explored by Kupe. Kupe set off from his homeland Hawaiki in pursuit of a giant wheke/octopus. The pursuit led him to Aotearoa New Zealand, where he finally caught the creature in Raukawakawa Cook Strait<sup>1</sup>. In the landscape later known as Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington, he named rock formations near Cape Palliser Ngā Ra o Kupe (the sails of Kupe), Arapāoa, Mana, the islands Matiu (Somes Island) and Mākaro (Ward Island) before returning to Hawaiki.<sup>2</sup> These names were preserved as later iwi came to settle the land.

Mana whenua of the Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington region trace their origins to the subsequent arrival of the Kurahaupō waka. Some traditions name Whātonga

<sup>1</sup> Greater Wellington Regional Council website [Māori history of the Greater Wellington region](#) | Greater Wellington Regional Council ([gw.govt.nz](http://gw.govt.nz)) Accessed November 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Reid, "Muaūpoko - Early History"; Royal, "First Peoples in Māori Tradition - Kupe."



as the captain of the waka. He later explored Te Ika a Maui the North Island from Māhia south, naming the harbour Te Whānganui-a-Tara, for his son Tara.<sup>3</sup> Descendants include Ngāi Tara, Rangitane, Muaupoko, Ngāti Apa and Ngāti Ira.<sup>4</sup> There are several pā, kainga and cultivation sites in the wider area on and around Matāirangi Mount Victoria and Tangi Te Keo that are associated with Ngai Tara, particularly with the Ngāti Hinewai hapū at Akatarewa Pā Mount Albert and the associated Hauwai Cultivation Area (approximately the Basin Reserve).

From the 1820s, a series of migrations from the north progressively pushed out these earlier inhabitants. The new arrivals included Ngāti Toa and Te Āti Awa. By the late 1830s, Ngāti Ira and related groups had largely been driven out of the area. Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington Harbour area has seen various tribes occupying in succession and periods of simultaneous occupation by different tribes. The harbour has been held by Taranaki tribes since 1832. By 1840, Te Āti Awa, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngāti Tama, and Ngāti Toa had established rights through conquest, occupation, and use of resources.<sup>5</sup>

The most complex and turbulent period began when Europeans arrived in the early 19th century and continued until the arrival of the New Zealand Company settlers in 1839, who chose Port Nicholson as the site for its first settlement of British immigrants. The town was laid out, and settlers began to arrive in 1840. A European settlement quickly developed, and local mana whenua were pushed out of their lands.<sup>6</sup>

### **Matāirangi / Tangi-te-keo**

Mount Victoria was known as Matāirangi (to gaze at the starry sky) or Tangi-te-keo and is connected with the traditions of the formation of Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington harbour. The harbour was originally a land-locked lake, home to two large taniwha. One taniwha, energetic Ngake, forged a passage from Te Awakairangi the Hutt River to the open sea, creating the entrance to the harbour. The second, Whataitai, following in Ngake's wake, became stranded with the outgoing tide and eventually died. Whataitai's spirit took the form of a bird, that flew to the top of the peak and cried farewell before departing to Ranginui – hence its name Tangi te keo.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Waitangi Tribunal, "Te Whanganui a Tara Me Ona Takiwa," 17–18.

<sup>4</sup> Love, "Te Āti Awa of Wellington"; Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, "Research Report on Heritage Values Hannah Playhouse, Wellington."

<sup>5</sup> Waitangi Tribunal, "Te Whanganui a Tara Me Ona Takiwa."

<sup>6</sup> Love, "Te Āti Awa of Wellington."

<sup>7</sup> Wellington City Libraries, "Te Aro Pa and Matairangi."





## Purchase agreement<sup>8</sup>

In 1839 the New Zealand Company bought land in the Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington Harbour area. Much of the land had been held by Taranaki iwi and hapū since 1832, including Te Ātiawa, Ngāti Tama, Ngāti Mutunga, Taranaki and Ngāti Ruanui, who migrated south from Taranaki in the 1820s and early 1830s.

Soon after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, the Crown set about examining the New Zealand Company's purchase agreements, including with investigations by land claims commissioner William Spain that began in 1842. Spain's preliminary report expressed the view that "...most of the land claimed by the company at Port Nicholson had not been validly purchased from Maori."<sup>9</sup>

The land around the suburb of Matāirangi Mount Victoria was at that time associated with the wider rohe of Te Aro Pā. The settlement was one of the largest in the Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington Region and was established before the 1820s. By the 1840s the settlement near Taranaki Street included about 2 hectares, along with approximately 60-80 acres of cultivated land.<sup>10</sup> The pā is associated with Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika<sup>11</sup>, particularly Ngāti Ruanui who settled at the western end. In theory Te Aro Pā should have been exempt from the New Zealand Company purchase agreement, particularly following the final report by William Spain in 1845 in which...

*He awarded the company the land which was set out in the schedule attached to the deeds of release, but Maori pa, cultivations, burial grounds, and native reserves were excluded from the grant...The [New Zealand] company, however, rejected this grant, largely because it allowed Maori to retain their pa and cultivations on land purchased from the company by settlers.<sup>12</sup>*

The Crown then sought to "accommodate" the New Zealand Company, and Lieutenant W A McCleverty was appointed to settle the claims with a system of exchanges "whereby Maori gave up their cultivations on sections purchased from

<sup>8</sup> This is summarised from Te Whanganui a Tara Me Ona Takiwa Report on the Wellington District of 2003 (WAI 145).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> [Search the List | Toenga o Te Aro \(remains of Te Aro Pā\) | Heritage New Zealand](#)

<sup>11</sup> *Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika is a collective that comprises people of Te Ātiawa, Taranaki, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngāti Tama and others including Ngāti Mutunga from a number of Taranaki iwi whose ancestors migrated to Wellington in the 1820s and 30s and who signed the Port Nicholson Block Deed of Purchase in 1839.* – see Te Puni Kōkiri Ministry of Māori Development website [TKM | Iwi | Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika | Te Kahui Mangai](#) accessed November 2021.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid



the company by settlers in 'exchange' for other land which McCleverty reserved for them." <sup>13</sup> WAI 145 found that the process was unfair, in part because...

*Almost all the land reserved for Maori by McCleverty was tenths reserve land (of which Port Nicholson Maori were already the beneficial owners); town belt land (which...had never been purchased from Maori); or land outside the surveyed sections acquired by the company under the deeds of release (which Maori had never sold and which therefore still belonged to them). <sup>14</sup>*

The loss of the lands around Te Aro Pā, including the Te Aro wetlands around the Waitangi Awa, and the forested slopes of Matāirangi Mount Victoria removed access to important resources. WAI 145 notes that...

*The land reserved for [Māori in Wellington] by McCleverty amounted to an average of 21 acres per person, a land base which we have found to be completely inadequate for both their short- and long-term needs, and much of the land reserved for them was of poor quality. <sup>15</sup>*

Te Ara The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand notes that:

*As Wellington grew, British colonists called for the pā to be sold. The residents resisted, but the settlers forced the issue and by 1870 it had been subdivided and sold. <sup>16</sup>*

## Mount Victoria

Despite the controversial sale and purchase agreements, the New Zealand Company laid out plans for a new town, and settlers began to arrive in 1840.<sup>17</sup> Tangi-te-keo was named Mount Victoria for the young Queen and developed as one of the new settlement's first suburbs. As early as 1841, 624 hectares were reserved in Matāirangi Mount Victoria by the New Zealand Company for a "public recreation ground for the inhabitants of Wellington".<sup>18</sup> Matāirangi Mount Victoria is still home to Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington's Town Belt, although somewhat reduced in size. The settlement patterns in the suburb were described as a "rather genteel development".<sup>19</sup> The panoramic views of the elevated site remained

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

<sup>16</sup> Chris Maclean, 'Wellington region - Early Māori history', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/artwork/13194/te-aro-pa> (accessed 4 November 2021)

<sup>17</sup> Love, "Te Āti Awa of Wellington."

<sup>18</sup> Ritchie, "Unanimous, Historic Decision: More Protection, Special Status for Town Belt."

<sup>19</sup> Hodgson, "Colonial Capital: Wellington 1865-1910," 150.



unobstructed by the low-rise buildings on the Te Aro flat, and a number of Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington's colonial elite took to its slopes. Grand homes were erected, many fronting Brougham Street.<sup>20</sup>

## 20 Austin Street

This house was built in 1875<sup>21</sup> for Robert Chisenhall Hamerton (1838-1913), a prominent civil servant and lawyer. Hamerton bought the property in 1875 for the purpose of building a house.

Hamerton was born in Lancashire and he and his family arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand in 1854, settling in Taranaki. He fought in the Taranaki land wars and was awarded the New Zealand war medal. After the war he joined the Civil Service and was quickly promoted to Registrar of Deeds, Joint Stock Companies, Births, Deaths, and Marriages, and Deputy-Commissioner of Stamps at New Plymouth. He married Mary Parris in 1859 and together they had five sons and three daughters.

In 1871, the family moved to Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington, where Hamerton took up the position of Deputy-Registrar of the Supreme Court. In 1874, he was appointed Secretary for Stamps and Controller of Legacy Duties. He studied law part-time and in 1878 was admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court.<sup>22</sup>

In 1880 Hamerton was appointed Public Trustee, a position he kept until he retired in 1891. An Act of Parliament was passed to provide him with a pension.<sup>23</sup> He then took up private practice, initially joining forces with C F Richmond before forming Hamerton and Andrew with John Andrew, who later bought the house from Hamerton. Hamerton retired in 1907. He was a prominent mason and churchwarden and vestryman at St Mark's Church, Sussex Street. He also helped found the Mount Victoria Bowling Club.

Given the size of his family, the house Hamerton had built was a substantial one from the outset and not dramatically different from the house there today. As was typical of the times, the house's main elevation was the view over Te Aro (to the west), as Austin Street was not well formed and had few houses on it at the time. A substantial piece of land accompanied the house.

<sup>20</sup> Hodgson, 150.

<sup>21</sup> Wellington City Council Te Aro Ward, Rate Book 1875-76, Wellington City Archives (WCA)

<sup>22</sup> *Evening Post*, 6 September 1913 p.6

<sup>23</sup> Cyclopedia Company Limited 1897, *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand [Wellington Provincial District]*, Cyclopedia Company, Limited, Wellington p.329



The Hamertons lived at Austin Street until 1902, when the house was sold to Robert Hamerton's legal partner John Andrew.<sup>24</sup> The couple moved to Kelburn. Andrew and his wife Jessie occupied the house for just two years before he died. The property was promptly subdivided by Andrew's executors and the house and associated land sold to Mary Northcote, described as a widow, in 1904.<sup>25</sup> This began a series of relatively quick sales. Mary Northcote sold it to Janet Bulkley, also a widow, in 1908, who then sold it to Francesca Fernandez, whose husband John was a surveyor, in 1919. In 1925, she sold the house to Annie and Miriam James (sisters-in-law from Pahiatua) who almost immediately on-sold it to Henry and Isabel Porteous.<sup>26</sup> The Porteous couple occupied the house for a period before leasing it to Edith Robertson (and others), but they remained the owners until 1943, when they sold the house to civil servant Olive Cooksey.

It was Cooksey who made the first recorded changes to the house—the addition of a bathroom on the ground floor and the conversion of the house into two flats, one on each floor.<sup>27</sup> However, the plan does not show the provision of a kitchen on the first floor. The application was made in November 1944, so it is assumed to have been completed the following year. Cooksey also lived at the house for a period in the late 1950s. In 1962, she sold the house to Mr and Mrs S Andrews<sup>28</sup> who later rented the flats out as Andrews Apartments.<sup>29</sup>

By 1982, the house had been converted into three flats and was sold to new owners.<sup>30</sup> The following year they hired the well-known local architect Roger Walker to convert the house back into a family home. He drew up designs to demolish two sheds and the kitchen, building a significant addition to the street frontage (for a new kitchen), building a new entrance porch, and a garage in an extension to the existing pitched roof extension on the same elevation.<sup>31</sup> In 1987, they added a pergola and garden shed to the north-west corner of the house.<sup>32</sup> It was sold twice in 1991<sup>33</sup> and the present owners bought the house in 1999. There are no records of recent changes although the current owners have

<sup>24</sup> WN5/171, Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)

<sup>25</sup> WN139/58, LINZ

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> B23673; 20 Austin Street, erect additions, bathroom - 17 Nov 1944, WCA

<sup>28</sup> WN139/58, LINZ

<sup>29</sup> *New Zealand Post Office Directory*, 1972

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> C62825; 20 Austin Street, convert 3 flats to dwelling - 18 Aug 1983, WCA

<sup>32</sup> D8004; 20 Austin Street, dwelling additions and alterations – 1987, WCA

<sup>33</sup> WN139/58, LINZ



undertaken a great deal of maintenance and repair of the house in the period since.

### **A changing suburb**

20 Austin Street illustrates many of Matāirangi Mount Victoria's overall patterns of development history. When the house was built in the mid-1870s, Wellington city's population was just over 11,000 people.<sup>34</sup> The house was constructed on a large section of land by a wealthy settler family and surrounded by gardens and farmland. This was typical of the city fringe where sheep grazed the steepest of Wellington city's hills, with dairying and food production on some of the lower slopes. Commerce, industry, and houses occupied the flat and gently sloping land at the edge of the deep-water harbour.

By the late nineteenth century, the population of the city had grown to at least 37,000 people, and a pattern of high-density housing developed in the inner-city suburbs.<sup>35</sup> The Town Belt (including along the ridge of Matāirangi Mount Victoria, Tangi-te-Keo) effectively divided the city from the surrounding countryside.<sup>36</sup> There was little public transport, and most people lived within an easy walking distance to their work, business, and the city. The land at 20 Austin Street was subdivided for new houses.

The development of public transport in the 20<sup>th</sup> century allowed for the growth of the outer suburbs at a time when Aotearoa New Zealand cities "reproduced the overcrowding, squalor and diseases that settlers had fled in Europe."<sup>37</sup> Those who could afford to do so moved away from urban centres, and there was a push to build new suburbs to improve the living conditions, particularly for families on modest incomes. Fewer families lived in the city and inner suburbs, and many of the grand houses in Matāirangi Mount Victoria, such as 20 Austin Street, were converted to other uses including apartments or boarding houses for transient workers.

The lack of popularity of the inner-city suburbs reversed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century, and Austin Street was reconfigured as a single-family dwelling in the 1980s. This is typical of Matāirangi Mount Victoria's history from the late 1970s

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<sup>34</sup> Adrian Humphris and Geoff Mew, *Ring Around the City: Wellington's New Suburbs 1900 -1930*, Aotearoa New Zealand: Steele Roberts, p14

<sup>35</sup> Adrian Humphris and Geoff Mew, *Ring Around the City: Wellington's New Suburbs 1900 -1930*, Aotearoa New Zealand: Steele Roberts, p16

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p13

<sup>37</sup> Mark Derby, 'Suburbs', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/suburbs> (accessed 16 November 2021)



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where the suburb attracted new residents who repaired, maintained, and renovated many of the houses.<sup>38</sup>

### **The Mount Victoria Heritage Study**

In 2016-17 Wellington City Council undertook a study of Matāirangi Mount Victoria to investigate and understand the historic heritage values of the suburb, in particular its stock of predominantly Victorian and Edwardian housing. It was prompted by community concerns that Matāirangi Mount Victoria's heritage of housing was being undermined and lost through demolitions and alterations. Work began at the start of 2016 and concluded in June 2017 with a report which assessed the nature and integrity of the building stock, and researched areas and individual buildings with high levels of physical integrity and potential heritage value.

The study identified 39 houses that were likely to have significant heritage value. Austin Street was researched by the study's authors and recommended for addition to the Wellington District Plan Heritage Building Schedule.

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<sup>38</sup> <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/wellington-places/page-2>



## Photographs and Images



The Hamertons' house in 1884. (BB-2235-1-1-G, Alexander Turnbull Library)

## Chronologies and Timelines

### Timeline of events, including modifications

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1875 | House built.   |
| 1945 | House converted into two flats.  |
| 1982 | House converted back into single dwelling, two sheds demolished, new kitchen built in addition to street frontage to replace lean-to containing kitchen, and garage formed in existing pitched roof extension on same elevation. |
| 1987 | Pergola and garden shed added to north-west corner of house.   |
| 2021 | Chimney removed; new lightweight chimney to replicate appearance of the original brick chimney.  |



## Occupation history

1875-1902	Robert and Mary Hamerton and family
1902-1904	John and Jessie Andrew
1904-1908	Mary Northcote
1908-1919	Janet Bulkley
1919-1925	John and Francesca Fernandez
1925-1932	Graeme and Isabel Porteous
1932-1959	Edith Robertson (later Edith Holley)
1959-1962	Olive Cooksey

## Biographies

N/A

## Plans and Elevations

N/A

## Physical Description

### Setting – geographical / physical context

Matāirangi Mount Victoria is a highly visible inner-city residential suburb that forms an important backdrop to the city. It is defined by its steep topography, west to north-west aspect across the city and harbour, and the high proportion of original buildings that remain in place. The greater part of Matāirangi Mount Victoria is confined by the Town Belt at its peak, and city centre at its base. Despite the lack of flat land, there is an overall perception of high-density building.

Dwellings, including this house at 20 Austin Street, were built to take advantage of a certain view or landscape, or to negotiate a difficult site which adds visual interest to the suburb.<sup>39</sup> During the inter-war period, Matāirangi Mount Victoria became a less desirable suburb, and a number of older homes were converted into boarding houses or flats. This meant older houses were retained, rather than replaced by new buildings. Families returning to Matāirangi Mount Victoria are

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<sup>39</sup> Wellington City Council, "Mt Victoria Heritage Study Report," 12.





embracing the run-down, formerly grand residences. Many have been renovated and restored, retaining Matāirangi Mount Victoria's predominantly Victorian and Edwardian character.<sup>40</sup>

### **Buildings or structures**

The house is a fine example of an Italianate villa with an ornate two-storey verandah and projecting bay to the front, or west-facing aspect of the section, and with the rear of the building facing the street.

No. 20 was built to take advantage of the views from Matāirangi Mount Victoria, at a time when Austin Street was barely formed and there were few houses on the hillside. As a result, the house was built facing Te Aro and the west elevation is understandably more visually interesting than the street elevation. The former has a projecting gable alongside a double verandah. The rear, street-facing elevation is more functional; and has always had single-storey lean-tos and outbuildings.

This timber-framed and -clad house has a corrugated iron roof, which was once clad in shingles. The form of the hipped roof is original, and also somewhat unusual, in that between the two gables running east-west there is a smaller hip that matches the width of and runs over the entrance porch on the rear elevation. This part of the roof runs back to the return of the hip.

The rear elevation makes conspicuous use of Classical decoration. The gable end has a broken pediment, which sits above a single window. This window is capped by a full pediment, supported by corbels, over a double-hung sash separated into nine lights (including one large pane) by mullions and transoms. This window style is repeated on this and other elevations. A flat-roofed bay window projects from the ground floor.

Alongside this are the two floors with verandahs. The ground floor verandah has been extended with a convex roof addition and this is linked to a garden shed on the north side of the property. Lattice work on the verandah supports, on both floors, is also likely to be a more modern addition. The ground floor entrance is recessed and there are also entrances onto the ground floor via two pairs of French doors. The first floor verandah, also accessed by French doors, has Union Jack balustrading.

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<sup>40</sup> Wellington City Council, 12–13.



The street elevation is partly obscured by various additions. From the street, left-to-right, there is the garage, entrance porch and a lean-to that contains the kitchen. From the north side of the kitchen, a covered way wraps around these structures and finishes on the north side of the house. The whole of the front is enclosed by a fence to form a courtyard.

The interior was not inspected, but at the time of its restoration to a single-family home, the first floor was largely devoted to bedrooms and bathrooms, with living areas, laundry kitchen and dining downstairs.

## Materials

- Timber – framing, joinery
- Concrete – foundations
- Corrugated steel – roof

## Archaeological sites

20 Austin Street is located within R27/270, the Thomas Ward Survey Map, an archaeological site under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.

## Setting – surroundings / site description

This house once sat in some isolation on its hillside location, surrounded by gardens, with no house within 50 metres or more of it. Today it stands on a smaller section with its rear elevation to the street, surrounded on the other three sides by houses. The house is set back from the street edge, with space in front and behind the house for gardens and outbuildings.

The neighbouring two-storey houses at 18 and 22 Austin Street appear to have been built on land subdivided from the property, and are typical of the later Victorian and Edwardian houses in Matāirangi Mount Victoria. They were both designed to face the street with a smaller set-back to the street-edge. Together the three buildings make a pleasant group, although 20 Austin Street is clearly older and more refined.



## Comparative Analysis Summary

20 Austin Street is a fine Victorian villa of architectural distinction with significant physical integrity and historic values. The villa was built to take advantage of the views from Matāirangi Mount Victoria, at a time when Austin Street was barely formed and there were few houses on the hillside. The house remains one of the best-preserved properties from the 1870s.

There are only handful of other villas of a similar age, integrity, and local historic significance in Matāirangi Mount Victoria. Most notably, 64 Brougham Street, Sunnyrise, is another example of a Victorian Villa with architectural value and is augmented with an ornate verandah on two elevations, originally designed to take advantage of the views, which has been obscured over the years. Both properties share significant local value as a rare, physical reminder of a time when Matāirangi Mount Victoria was a sparsely populated rural retreat where stately homesteads were scattered across the hillside.

56 Pirie Street is also significant for its age and is another proposed addition to the heritage schedule. Although the house has had many additions and alterations, it retains significant architectural values as a fine and eclectic example of a cottage that has been developed into a substantial Victorian villa. Also in Matāirangi Mount Victoria, the former Shop and Bakehouse at 1 Queen Street was erected in 1878 as one of the suburb's first commercial buildings, giving it significance historic value at a local level.

Collectively, these properties built in the 1870s have architectural, historic and rarity values as survivors from an early period in Matāirangi Mount Victoria's European history.



## Evaluation Criteria

**A. Historic values: these relate to the history of a place and how it demonstrates important historical themes, events, people or experiences.**

**(i) Themes: the place is associated with important themes in history or patterns of development.**

Matāirangi Mount Victoria has **significant historical value** in the Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington Region for its association with the theme of migration and European settlement in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The suburb is also strongly associated with changes to settlement patterns in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including suburban expansion and a 'flight' from the inner-city after WWII. This was followed by a return to city living and the gentrification of inner-city suburbs in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

20 Austin Street is one of the oldest in Matāirangi Mount Victoria. It has a **strong association** with the early development of Matāirangi Mount Victoria, and clearly demonstrates each of these important themes

**(ii) Events: the place has an association with an important event or events in local, regional or national history.**

Not assessed

**(iii) People: the place is associated with the life or works of an individual, group or organisation that has made a significant contribution to the district, region or nation**

This house has **some historic** importance for its association with its original owner, Robert Hamerton, civil servant, lawyer and Public Trustee for 11 years.

**(iv) Social: the place is associated with everyday experiences from the past and contributes to our understanding of the culture and life of the district, region or nation.**



Not assessed

***B. Physical values: these values relate to the physical evidence present.***

- (i) Archaeological: there is potential for archaeological investigation to contribute new or important information about the human history of the district, region or nation.***

Unknown.

20 Austin Street is a pre-1900 building, so is an archaeological structure, and is part of the Central City NZAA R27/270 Archaeological Site, the Thomas Ward 1892 Survey Map, an archaeological site as defined by the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.

- (ii) Architectural: the place is notable for its style, design, form, scale, materials, ornamentation, period, craftsmanship or other architectural values***

This house has **significant** architectural value as an **excellent example** of an early Italianate villa. The west elevation is particularly fine, and the detailing on the gable a notable feature, as is the use of nine-pane sashes that lift the appearance of many of the windows beyond the typical. The unusual arrangement of the roof is also of considerable interest.

- (iii) Townscape: the place is strongly associated with other natural or cultural features in the landscape or townscape, and/or contributes to the heritage values of a wider townscape or landscape setting, and/or it is a landmark.***

The house demonstrates the typical development patterns of Matāirangi Mount Victoria where the grand houses of the rich were often built on large sections and set back from the street. These sites were later subdivided when the housing density in the suburb increased in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with later houses constructed along the street-edge. 20 Austin Street has **some townscape value** within the wider context of Matāirangi Mount Victoria for its association with this older pattern of development.



**(iv) Groups: The place is part of a group of buildings, structures, or sites that taken together have coherence because of their age, history, style, scale, materials, or use.**

There is a small group of two-storey houses on the west side of Austin Street, centred around No.20 that share some common features, especially scale and detailing, that give them **some** collective coherence.

**(v) Surroundings: the setting or context of the place contributes to an appreciation and understanding of its character, history and/or development.**

Not assessed

**(vi) Scientific: The area or place has the potential to provide scientific information about the history of the district or region**

Not assessed

**(vii) Technological: the place provides evidence of the history of technological development; and/or demonstrates innovation or important methods of construction or design; and/or contains unusual construction materials.**

Not assessed

**(viii) Integrity: the significant physical values of the place have been largely unmodified. This includes the retention of important modifications and/or additions from later periods.**

The house has been altered, renovated and restored, yet retains much from the time of the building's construction to give it **significant integrity**. Externally, it is not far removed from the original 1875 house, with the exception of additions to the front elevation, including the garage.



**(ix) Age: the place is particularly old in the context of human occupation of the Wellington region.**

The house is one of the oldest in Matāirangi Mount Victoria and has **significant age** value as a well-preserved and reasonably intact 1870s Italianate villa.

**C. Social values: these values relate to the meanings that a place has for a particular community or communities.**

**(i) Sentiment: the place has strong or special associations with a particular cultural group or community for spiritual, political, social, religious, ethnic, national, symbolic or commemorative reasons.**

Not assessed

**(ii) Recognition: the place is held in high public esteem for its historic heritage values, or its contribution to the sense of identity of a community, to the extent that if it was damaged or destroyed it would cause a sense of loss.**

The Mount Victoria Heritage Study was prompted by community concerns that Matāirangi Mount Victoria's heritage of housing was being undermined and lost through demolitions and alterations. The suburb is held in high public esteem by the local community to the extent that if it was damaged or destroyed it would cause a sense of loss.

**(iii) Sense of place/ continuity: the place provides evidence of cultural or historical continuity, or contributes to a sense of place for a community**

Not assessed

**D. Tangata whenua values: the place is sacred or important to Māori for spiritual, cultural or historical reasons.**

Not assessed



***E. Rarity: the place is unique or rare within the district or region.***

The house has **significant rarity** value in a Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington context, both for being a well-preserved and reasonably intact 1870s dwelling, that demonstrates an era of development, and for its intriguing roof design. It also demonstrates a quality of architectural detailing and workmanship that lifts it out of the ordinary.

***F. Representativeness: the place is a good example of its type, era or class it represents.***

This is a fine and **significant example** of an Italianate villa, with sufficient integrity to demonstrate its quality.

## Recommendations

20 Austin Street is recommended for listing in the District Plan as it meets the threshold for eligibility as a Historic Heritage Building, having significant architectural, integrity, rarity, and age values.

This is one of Matāirangi Mount Victoria's **best preserved** 1870s residences. It is oriented west for the views yet offers a stimulating view from the street. The house has **townscape value** for its interesting and elegant design, and for its setting within its site, clearly indicating that it is older and grander than its near neighbours. The house's return to a family residence in 1982 after a long period of use as flats led to internal and external changes to the house, however it remains recognisable as the house built in 1875. Thus, the house is significant for its **age and integrity** and as an **excellent architectural example** of an early Italianate Villa.

The house has **significant historic value** for its association with the key themes of development in Matāirangi Mount Victoria including migration and settlement, suburban expansion, and a 'flight' from the inner-city suburbs after WWII. This was followed by a return to city living and the gentrification of inner-city suburbs in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.





## Heritage Assessment Criteria

This building has been assessed against the Evaluation Criteria and found to be significant in the following heritage values: A, B, E, F

<b>A: Historic values</b>	Significant
(i) Themes	Y
(ii) Events	
(iii) People	
(iv) Social	
<b>B: Physical values</b>	Significant
(i) Archaeological	
(ii) Architectural	Y
(iii) Townscape	Y
(iv) Group	
(v) Surroundings	
(vi) Scientific	
(vii) Technological	
(viii) Integrity	Y
(ix) Age	Y
<b>C: Social values</b>	
(i) Sentiment	
(ii) Recognition	
(iii) Sense of place	
<b>D: Tangata whenua values</b>	
<b>E: Rarity</b>	Significant
<b>F: Representativeness</b>	Significant

## Extent of the Place

The extent of place should encompass the existing external form, scale, and materials of the building, including the roof.

### Non-heritage fabric / exclusions

Not assessed



## Sources and References

Cyclopedia Company Limited 1897, *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand [Wellington Provincial District]*, Cyclopedia Company, Limited, Wellington p.329

*Evening Post*, 6 September 1913 p.6

*New Zealand Post Office Directory*, 1880-1979

WN5/171, WN139/58, Land Information New Zealand

*Wellington City Archives*

Wellington City Council Te Aro Ward, Rate Book 1875-76

B23673; 20 Austin Street, erect additions, bathroom - 17 Nov 1944, WCA

C62825; 20 Austin Street, convert 3 flats to dwelling - 18 Aug 1983, WCA

D8004; 20 Austin Street, dwelling additions and alterations – 1987, WCA



# Appendices


Appendix 1 Comparative analysis

Appendix 2 Wellington Thematic Heritage Study 2013




## Appendix 1 Comparative analysis

### Points of comparison - 1870s two-storey houses

Place name	Address/ location/ NZTM	Heritage Listing or recognition of significance	Photographs	Analysis
House/Sunnyrise	64 Brougham Street, Matāirangi Mount Victoria	Proposed addition to the Wellington City Council heritage schedule		64 Brougham Street is historically significant for its association with Samuel Carroll, long-standing secretary of the Wellington Chamber of Commerce and proprietor of the <i>New Zealand Trade Review</i> , who was regarded as a person of considerable stature in 19 <sup>th</sup> century Te Whānganui-a-Tara Wellington. Like 20 Austin Street, his house was built in 1870s, is augmented

				<p>by a portico and rebuilt ornate verandah on two elevations and is a fine example of Victorian domestic architecture. The house is a rare survivor of the large, mostly single-storey villa, which were once dotted over the lower slopes of Matāirangi Mount Victoria. Almost all of these houses have gone, with the exception of 64 Brougham Street, which has survived on its tucked away section, giving the house a unique townscape value, as a reminder of a period when Matāirangi Mount Victoria was regarded as something of a pastoral retreat.</p>
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House	56 Pirie Street, Matāirangi Mount Victoria	Proposed addition to the Wellington City Council heritage schedule		<p>56 Pirie Street has significant historic values for its association with the Tutchen family, significant early European settlers, local landowners and developers. It was home to William Attack, manager of the NZPA; and for its use as a Russian Orthodox Church. Like 20 Austin Street, the house is significant for its age – it began life as a cottage in 1874 and was subsequently transformed into a large Victorian villa. Although the house has had many additions and alterations, most are associated with changes made by significant individuals,</p>
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				<p>groups and organisations. The survival of substantial parts of the building from each of these periods of it's history ensure that it has significant integrity. The house has architectural values as a fine, eclectic and substantial Victorian villa with significant street presence and townscape values.</p>
Former Shop and Bakehouse	1 Queen Street	Proposed addition to the Wellington City Council heritage schedule		<p>Another property dating from the 1870s, the former Shop and Bakehouse at 1 Queen Street were likely one of the first commercial buildings erected on Matāirangi Mount Victoria. Today they are almost certainly the suburb's oldest commercial buildings remaining and as a result, have significant</p>



				<p>historic value at a local level. The buildings have had many uses over their long history. 1 Queen St was a general store with a furniture manufacturer at the rear for decades and in the 1980s and early 1990s was a well-known restaurant, the Mount Victoria Cafe. The former shop and accommodation building occupies a prominent corner site and both buildings add much to the predominantly 19th century streetscape character of Brougham and Queen Streets. Although the house has undergone many physical changes, the houses share similar historic value at a local level.</p>
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## Appendix 2 Wellington Thematic Heritage Study 2013

Refer to the Wellington Thematic Heritage Study 2013

[https://wellington.govt.nz/~/\\_media/services/community-and-culture/heritage/files/thematic-heritage-study.pdf](https://wellington.govt.nz/~/_media/services/community-and-culture/heritage/files/thematic-heritage-study.pdf)

	Select the themes & subthemes which apply to the place	Yes / some (add explanation)
<b>A</b>	<b>MIGRATION/ IMMIGRATION</b>	
<b>A2.2</b>	<b>Colonisation</b>	
A2.2F	Housing	Built in the 1870s, 20 Austin Street is an early homestead in Matāirangi Mount Victoria.
<b>A2.4</b>	<b>Post WWII flight to outer suburbs and changing desirability of inner-city suburbs</b>	Yes – demonstrates the changing use of inner-city houses
<b>A2.5</b>	<b>Gentrification/ protection of heritage housing</b>	
A2.5C	Restored houses/ precincts	
<b>A2.6</b>	<b>Return to city living/ apartment dwelling</b>	Yes